



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**  
**Forty-second session**

Summary record **of the 857th meeting (Chamber B)**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 23 October 2008, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Ms. Gaspard (Vice-Chairperson)

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*In the absence of Ms. Šimonović, Ms. Gaspard, Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (continued)**

*Third periodic report of Kyrgyzstan (continued) (CEDAW/C/KGZ/3; CEDAW/C/KGZ/Q/3 and Add.1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Kyrgyzstan took places at the Committee table.*

*Articles 7 to 9*

2. **Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani**, noting that before the constitutional reform of 2005, the proportion of women in the Kyrgyz Parliament had been practically nil, said that it was heartening that that proportion was now 26 per cent, a remarkable progression. It was in Parliament, where legislation on all areas covered by the Convention was elaborated, that having a sufficient proportion of women was of special importance. She welcomed the new provision in the Electoral Code whereby neither sex could account for more than 70 per cent of the candidates on electoral lists, but enjoined vigilance in ensuring that in the next elections, women's representation did not decline from the current level.

3. Women must receive the necessary training to become candidates in local elections so that they would gain the skills and experience to rise to the parliamentary level. A minimum of 30 per cent representation at the local level was thus desirable in order to attain the constitutional goal of parity in parliamentary representation. Women must also be adequately represented in civil service positions, on influential government committees and in the judiciary so as to bring Kyrgyzstan into full alignment with the Convention.

4. The requirement that the Government prepare an annual report on the national situation with regard to gender equality would ensure follow-up on the progress made and give expression to the constitutional provisions according priority to international treaties such as the Convention over domestic legislation. It was to be hoped that the Kyrgyz delegation, in which there was nearly total male-female parity, would

continue working to promote compliance with the Convention, for example, by holding a press conference on its discussions with the Committee and the suggestions made, which would help to underline the fact that the Convention took precedence over domestic law and that harmonization must be effected.

5. **Ms. Neubauer** congratulated the Kyrgyz delegation on the improved participation of women in political and public life, but noted that progress remained uneven. She asked what measures had been adopted and concrete actions planned to enhance the appointment of women to leadership positions at the top managerial and decision-making levels, in particular in national authorities, the judiciary and the diplomatic service.

6. The participation of women in the governing bodies of political parties was very low. While the independence of political parties was an important principle, that did not preclude the creation of an environment in which political parties complied with constitutional principles. She asked whether any steps had been taken to change the internal culture of political parties so as to promote gender-balanced representation, including updating of the legislation on political parties.

7. According to the relevant data, representation of women in the diplomatic service was rising, but the highest echelons were nearly entirely male-dominated and there was still no female ambassador. She asked what measures were being taken to remedy that situation.

8. **The Chairperson**, speaking as a member of the Committee, requested additional information on the issue of nationality. She asked whether, in the case of a Kyrgyz national marrying a woman from a foreign country, the woman lost her nationality; and if not, whether she could pass it on to her children.

9. **Ms. Tashpaeva** (Kyrgyzstan) said that better representation of women in local legislative bodies was obviously important and required the adoption of special, perhaps radical, measures. Preparatory work had already been done with the NGOs that had produced alternative reports so that a joint press conference could be held to publicize the outcome of the discussion of the report with a view to devising joint actions to implement the Convention.

10. While equal representation of men and women in all spheres of public life had not yet been achieved, attempts were being made to change the fundamental culture of political parties. One such measure was to stipulate that political parties might take part in legislative initiatives only if they respected the special measures established to promote equal representation of men and women. There was also an inherent incentive in that 52 per cent of the electorate was made up of women, a resource to be mobilized by any political party that wished to gain strength in the country.

11. As part of the President's initiatives to promote gender equality, more women were to be appointed to decision-making positions and their representation in all national and local authorities was to be no less than 30 per cent. Some, but not enough, progress had been made, necessitating joint reflection on how to develop more active measures. Efforts were being made to ensure anonymity among male and female candidates in competitive examinations for government posts so that the qualifications of individual candidates could be properly assessed. Experience showed that women were often better educated than men and represented valuable potential.

12. The representation of women in diplomatic posts, especially at senior decision-making levels, admittedly left a great deal to be desired. Currently 24 women were employed abroad by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing only 10 per cent of the total. One woman was a consul general, four were counsellors, four were first secretaries and one was a second secretary. The Committee's recommendations would be valuable in that respect.

13. **Mr. Djumaliev** (Kyrgyzstan) said that his predecessor as Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva had been a woman, and the ambassadors to Austria, Belarus, India and the United States of America were women.

14. **Mr. Nazarov** (Kyrgyzstan) said that the elaboration of a new law on political parties would afford an opportunity to resolve many problems, including that of quotas. Kyrgyzstan was able to comply with the Convention and improve its implementation of gender policy only by retaining quotas; in future, when greater awareness had

developed and parity was achieved, quotas would no longer be necessary.

15. **Ms. Isakunova** (Kyrgyzstan) said that the requirement that the electoral lists of political parties must consist of no more than 70 per cent from one sex was a fairly good mechanism for inducing political parties to ensure gender equality. Precedents had already been established in which parties that did not respect that equilibrium had not been registered.

16. **Ms. Mambetali** (Kyrgyzstan), referring to Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani's comment at the previous meeting that in cases of domestic violence it should be the men who committed violence who should move out of the family home, said the relevant legislation envisaged handing victims over to the protection of a judicial body. A court was entitled to issue an order for a man who had committed aggression to leave his family domicile. However, the law on domestic violence did not distinguish between men and women and could apply to any member of the family who committed violence: adults, minors, men and women. It was true that mechanisms for monitoring the movements of violent individuals needed to be developed, but financial resources were needed for that purpose. A working group was elaborating amendments to the existing law with a view to improving the protection of victims of violence.

17. Nationality was based on mutual agreement between spouses. The right to choose nationality was accorded to children when they came of age, namely at 16 years. They then had the right to change their surnames, choosing that of either their mother or their father, and if the parents were of different nationalities they had the right to choose which nationality to take. In addition, the new Constitution provided for the possibility of dual nationality. Dual nationals, however, faced restrictions in access to voting, membership in executive bodies and occupation of leading positions in Parliament. The relevant legislation was fairly new and practice was still being developed so it was impossible for the time being to draw conclusions about its effects.

#### *Articles 10 to 14*

18. **Ms. Gabr**, referring to article 10 of the Convention, said the figures on education cited in the report suggested that there was no discrimination between girls and boys. However, no information was given on the specific educational situation in the rural

areas, where two thirds of the population lived. The report indicated that according to the Constitution, Kyrgyzstan was a secular State; she asked whether courses on religious knowledge were taught in secular schools and, if so, who was responsible for providing such instruction; and whether there were any denominational schools, and if so, what sort of training the teachers received. More information was needed on teacher training in general and on the organization of school curricula. She asked whether human rights education was provided in Kyrgyzstan, and if so, how the subject was taught. In view of the high rate of school drop-outs among girls owing to early pregnancy, she asked whether it was possible for a girl to return to school after giving birth. Lastly, she asked whether the phenomenon of sexual harassment in schools had been encountered.

19. **Ms. Pimentel** requested information on the impact of the Government strategy of supporting cycles of special broadcasts dedicated to the problem of gender equality, both on the nationwide television channel and on radio programmes (paras. 233 and 234 of the report). Alternative sources had informed the Committee that the Government did not adequately monitor the content of the broadcasts, which often offered ideas and showed situations inimical to the aims of the Convention and reintroduced or even introduced values and attitudes that contradicted the Convention's main principles of equality and non-discrimination: one example was polygamy. The sources had also mentioned that the media were engaging in pervasive hate speech and rampant homophobia.

20. She requested information about the gaps between men and women at the higher levels of education, including between female and male doctoral students and asked whether there was a strategy in place to diminish the phenomenon encountered worldwide whereby women went into some fields to the exclusion of others.

21. **Ms. Patten**, referring to article 11 of the Convention, said that the report indicated that the situation of women in the labour market remained unequal in comparison to that of men. She asked whether the Labour Code or the Law on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women provided for a complaint mechanism and whether awareness-raising campaigns were carried out to inform women about their rights.

She wished also to know whether there was a labour inspectorate with adequate human and financial resources to monitor compliance with labour legislation in both the public and private sector and in urban and rural areas and whether there were special labour courts or industrial tribunals. The report made no mention of any legislation on sexual harassment in the workplace.

22. She asked to what extent the macroeconomic policies of Kyrgyzstan addressed the informal sectors, where a gender disparity in economic power-sharing was an important contributing factor to women's poverty; what efforts were being undertaken to promote microenterprises, new small businesses and other employment opportunities for women and how the transition from the informal, unprotected sector to the formal sector was being facilitated.

23. Referring to the law on the wage calculation index adopted in January 2006, she asked whether the law had been reviewed to assess its effectiveness; whether it established a mechanism for regularly or periodically reformulating wage structures and how that was done in female-dominated professions; what impact the law had had on the wages of women in both the public and private sectors; and how the Government monitored compliance with the law.

24. Turning to article 14, she asked what services were in place to reach rural women, especially those in remote and isolated areas; how the Government addressed lack of access to capital assets by women involved in microenterprises and small- and medium-scale enterprises; and what efforts were being undertaken to provide outreach programmes and to inform poor women, particularly in rural and remote areas, of opportunities for market access.

25. **Ms. Begum**, referring to article 12 of the Convention, drew attention to paragraph 297 of the report, which stated that on average, some 60 per cent of pregnant women suffered from anaemia. Although the Government was providing iron-enriched flour to some 10 per cent of the population, the nutritional status of pregnant women remained a serious concern. She asked what the Government budget was for improving the nutritional status of pregnant women.

26. Although Kyrgyzstan had a number of impressive programmes, including the Manas Taalimi programme for the reform of health care, the Zhan-Enye programme, and a programme on healthy lifestyles

introduced into the curriculum of secondary and higher educational institutions, there was a very high rate of early pregnancy and maternal mortality. She asked what steps the Government had taken, especially in rural areas, to save the lives of those young women and whether a prenatal and antenatal health-care programme was available for rural women. An alternative report indicated that breast cancer and cervical cancer were a major cause of death. She asked what kind of screening system was available, especially in rural areas. Tuberculosis programmes existed in Kyrgyzstan but deaths from the disease were increasing, especially among women, and alcoholism was also present. She asked what health-care facilities were available for older and disabled women.

27. **Ms. Pimentel**, referring to paragraph 290 of the report, said she was greatly concerned by the increase in maternal mortality, and would appreciate additional information about early pregnancy, abortions and inadequate birth-spacing. One of the underlying problems might be a lack of reproductive health efforts in schools and the media. The Committee's general recommendation No. 24 on health could provide useful guidance in that area.

28. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling**, noting that while two thirds of the Kyrgyz population lived in rural areas, only a small amount of the country actually consisted of arable land, asked what other work was available in rural areas. Although discriminatory legislation with regard to land distribution had been repealed, it seemed that only a very small percentage of women owned land, and those who did possessed very small plots, lacked machinery for exploiting them and tended to be older, in most cases widows. She asked whether elderly widows normally lived with their families and whether they had access to health care and what opportunities were available for younger women, especially adolescents. She also asked what the difference was between peasant (farm) holdings and farms of individual entrepreneurs.

29. **Ms. Hayashi** asked what accounted for the huge gap between men and women in terms of farm ownership; what opportunities widows and divorced women had to acquire the title to land and whether the State party had any plans to promote the right of women to own land. As agriculture was the main product of Kyrgyzstan, it was essential for rural women to have de facto land ownership rights. She asked whether women and men had equal rights of

succession, and whether custom or practice differed from the legal situation.

30. On the question of the provision of credit and financial assistance to rural women, the report indicated that most microcredit funds were used in agriculture but did not give a clear picture of how women had benefited; for example, to what extent their income had been increased by that scheme and how many women had been freed from poverty.

31. **Ms. Tashpaeva** (Kyrgyzstan), responding to the questions asked about the educational system, said that gender aspects were a key element of State policy on education. The latest governmental standards for general educational institutions aimed to ensure that staff were aware of the basic principles of human rights, including gender aspects. Curricula and scholastic materials were being reviewed from a gender perspective. The Ministry of Education recommended that all higher educational institutions offer courses in the social and economic disciplines incorporating a gender perspective. Successful experience had been acquired in the higher educational institutions in the area of teacher training and in other disciplines.

32. Regarding the questions concerning the educational coverage of rural areas, she said that the average indicator for all regions was about 72 per cent, but it could be broken down by region if the Committee so desired.

33. **Ms. Isakunova** (Kyrgyzstan), replying to the question about the ratio between boys and girls enrolled in school, said that in the lower grades, boys outnumbered girls, but later on many boys left school since they had to help support the family financially. A certain percentage of girls also left school because of circumstances like early marriage and pregnancy. After the birth of a child they were offered various options for further schooling including night school and distance learning.

34. On the question of religious instruction, she said that despite the fact that Kyrgyzstan was a secular State, each citizen had every right to profess whatever faith he or she wished and to observe the rites of that religion and receive religious instruction. At the current time there was a whole range of institutions at the secondary and higher educational levels which provided religious instruction.

35. Sexual harassment occurred in Kyrgyzstan, as in other countries, both in private enterprises and in the educational system. Unfortunately, no specific research on that phenomenon had been carried out. The Law on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women contained a definition of sexual harassment, which had been lacking in earlier legislation.

36. In 2003, on the initiative of the secretariat of the National Council on Women, Family and Gender Development, steps had been taken to introduce gender-based approaches in the educational sphere through teacher training and the integration of gender courses in secondary and higher education. An entire curriculum operated at the secondary school level to raise gender sensitivity. Nearly 50 teachers had taken summer courses to upgrade their skills at the summer gender schools organized with the support of the Women's Programme of the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation and the Ministry of Education. Courses on gender were now given in various higher educational institutions and the subject was integrated into the teaching of various disciplines. Scientific research was carried out in the context of thesis work, dissertations were defended and a great deal of material was published in the field of gender studies.

37. **Ms. Sagynbaeva** (Kyrgyzstan) said that the relatively high level of anaemia among pregnant women was documented both by official statistics and by various research findings, the former putting the rate at 43.8 per cent and the latter yielding figures ranging from 60 to 70 per cent. Research had shown that the high rate of anaemia was influenced not only by the non-availability of healthy foods but also by eating habits and traditions. To counteract the problem, iron supplements had been included in the list of essential medicines and were available on prescription to pregnant women at reduced cost, depending on their financial status. Twice a year children aged 6 to 15 months and pregnant women were given vitamin A free of charge.

38. Worldwide experience had shown that one of the most effective strategies for reducing anaemia was enriching flour with iron. There were now 22 flour mills and flour enrichment plants in Kyrgyzstan, but they still furnished enriched flour to only 17 per cent of the population. To improve the situation and with the assistance of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), pilot projects had been carried out in 2007

on flour enrichment for home cooking. The results had been encouraging, and in July 2008, it had been decided to extend the programme to all regions of the country. Steps were being taken to enrich flour in small flour mills with a view to increasing the availability of enriched flour to the rural population. Rural health committees were being mobilized so as to change eating habits, particularly among pregnant women and mothers, and to ensure that medical personnel gave appropriate advice.

39. Despite the efforts made, maternal and child mortality remained fairly high, although the figures fluctuated, in part because of underreporting of infant mortality. In order to obtain more reliable figures, and on the basis of recommendations by the World Health Organization (WHO), in the past two years maternal audits, or confidential collection of data on maternal mortality, had been instituted. In addition, by decree of the Minister of Health, a moratorium had been proclaimed with respect to civil liability in connection with any increase in the figures for maternal mortality so that medical personnel, no longer fearing prosecution in such cases, would report the real figures.

40. More accurate figures made it possible to look in a critical manner at the factors behind the high rates of maternal mortality and to develop measures to eliminate them. Shortcomings had been discerned in prenatal care by medical personnel and midwifery centres; infant mortality figures pointed to mortality in the first seven days after birth. That had furnished the impetus for a programme to improve perinatal care, including through immediate midwifery assistance, other measures envisaged were better training of staff, improved equipment for midwifery centres and provision to them of motor vehicles, since pregnant women were not always brought to midwifery centres in a timely manner.

41. The reduction of maternal and child mortality had to be addressed not only by the Ministry of Health but also through sectoral approaches and the support of civil society. Rural health committees were being called upon to inform the population of danger signs indicating that a woman needed to be taken quickly to a clinic. The Zhan-Enye programme, aimed at reducing maternal mortality, had come to an end in 2006. It had not achieved the established goals for lack of financial support and of integration with the health-care reforms then being undertaken. For the Manas Taalimi

programme, on the other hand, financial resources had been provided from the State budget, including for the purchase of equipment, supplements to the diet of pregnant women and informational and instructional campaigns.

42. Early diagnosis of breast cancer was integrated into the primary health-care network, where well-informed workers carried out consultations with women to show them the proper techniques. The national oncological centre now had a mammography unit which every year travelled to remote parts of the country to provide qualified breast cancer detection services.

43. Rural women's access to medical services had until recently been problematic, in that not all regions were financed in the same way. Budget resources of 162 million som had now been allocated in order to erase disparities between regions. As a result, the health budget for remote regions had been brought up to the national level. A network of pharmacies in remote areas had been opened where health workers were authorized to make up prescriptions.

44. Forty-one per cent of all tuberculosis sufferers were women, and their mortality rate was about 30 per cent. The availability of programmes for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis was identical for men and women. Alcoholism among women, like violence against women, was underreported. In 2007, the number reported had been 336, although in reality it was undoubtedly higher. Rural health committees were working on prevention of alcoholism, including through investigation of how much money a family spent on alcohol and how that affected the family budget. Such measures resonated with the population when they saw in practice how much was spent on alcohol each year. Rehabilitation measures were carried out by specialized institutions: in 2007, of all those who underwent rehabilitation courses, one third had been women.

45. Although abortion had been cited as a cause of maternal mortality, official statistics showing yearly reductions in the relevant figures were heartening. However, that situation also reflected the development of private medical practices, which kept some abortions from falling into the statistical register. Even if it occurred more rarely, women still died from abortion, and work must continue not only to provide sufficient contraceptives but also to offer consultations

and family planning and promote the country's overall strategy for reproductive health.

46. **Ms. Tashpaeva** (Kyrgyzstan), responding to Ms. Patten's question on whether there was a special body for monitoring compliance with the labour legislation, said that that was one of the main functions of the State Labour Inspectorate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. There was also a mechanism for complaints regarding violations of labour legislation, and such violations had indeed been brought before it.

47. On the issue of economic power-sharing, she said that all possible means were being considered so as to provide social support and compensatory measures to women. While the recipients of microcredit were primarily women, the quantity of such credit had not significantly increased of late, showing that women were now more successful economically. A salient example of a successful transition from the informal to the formal sector was the sewing industry, which had benefited from a number of incentives. In the context of improving the life of rural populations, consideration was being given to elaborating mechanisms to provide credit, including microcredit, on a non-taxable basis.

48. A minimum wage law had been adopted in 2008, and the new Constitution provided that the minimum wage must not fall below the subsistence level. Standards were now being developed for the calculation of both the minimum wage and the subsistence level.

49. Kyrgyzstan was a mountainous country and there were some remote high-altitude regions that posed serious problems of access. Nevertheless, certain social services were provided to all regions without exception, namely education, social welfare, pensions and health care, and efforts were being made to improve the transport infrastructure. Compensation and subsidies funded from the State budget were given to people who lived in remote areas, including supplements to their wages and pensions and certain allowances.

50. On the issue of de jure and de facto equality in family relations and ownership of land, she said that in the light of the Committee's comments on the second periodic report, Kyrgyz legislation had been amended to stipulate that plots of land could be divided; that meant that in the event of divorce, a woman could

receive her part of the land, sell it independently, and so forth. Unfortunately no detailed data on the de facto situation was available, as yet.

51. **Mr. Nazarov** (Kyrgyzstan) said that not all the funding for measures to improve the lives of women in rural areas came from the State budget: donors were also involved. On 9 November 2008, an agreement had been signed with donors, including a Japanese poverty reduction fund, on assistance in raising the living standards of rural women through the development of rural crafts. The project's total cost was US\$ 2 million and so far his Government's contributions had been in extrabudgetary resources: buildings had been allocated, the equipment in them was being repaired and training in business planning was being provided. Pilot projects carried out in some regions had resulted in the creation of nine cooperatives in which over 2,000 people were already employed, all of them women.

52. **Ms. Isakunova** (Kyrgyzstan), replying to the question on the disparity in average wages between women and men, said it was true that over the past 15 years the gap had steadily increased, but there was a trend towards reversal of that situation. The average wages of women had been about 66 per cent of men's in 2006 but had risen to 68 per cent in 2007. Her Government had an employment strategy in which gender aspects were taken into account, and constructive changes had been made in the Labour Code. Whereas parental leave had formerly been available exclusively for mothers, and for fathers only in the event of the decease or hospitalization of the mother, now either parent, or another member of the family, could take parental leave. The previous one-and-a-half year maximum duration of parental leave had been increased to three years.

53. As to enrolment of boys and girls in higher educational institutions, about 60 per cent of students were girls, but their enrolment declined at the postgraduate level because many of them turned their attention to motherhood. The dissemination by the mass media of concepts that did not conform to the Convention was indeed a problem. Recently, for example, there had been widespread discussions about the legalization of polygamy, but good sense had prevailed both in society and in Parliament, where the measure had been staunchly opposed. Polygamy remained a criminal offence.

#### *Articles 15 and 16*

54. **Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani** said that although the Family Code of 30 August 2003 was almost entirely in line with articles 15 and 16 of the Convention, it apparently permitted a slight divergence regarding the marriageable age for men and women. Since Kyrgyzstan had ratified both the Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child without reservations, the marriageable age for both men and women must be kept at 18, and no exceptions permitted.

55. No reference to polygamy or bigamy was made in the Family Code. The report stated that the number of recorded marriages had been on the rise since 2001; the keeping of marriage registers, as mandated by the Civil Code, was important to ensure that there could be no second marriage after the one that was registered. It was apparently still possible to enter into marriages that were not in accordance with the Civil Code and certainly not with the rights of the child, since they involved the abduction of underage women. Bride theft had been said to be related to poverty situations, but men who married and impregnated underage women were exacerbating poverty in certain population groups. The Kyrgyz Government must ensure that the practice of bigamous or polygamous marriages through the abduction of young women was eradicated.

56. The information provided by NGOs had greatly helped the Committee to understand a number of issues. Kyrgyzstan was to be heartily congratulated on the excellent work done by its NGOs, which were concerned only with the well-being of the country and of women in society and should be mobilized to help the Government eliminate problems such as underage marriage.

57. **Ms. Dairiam** said a number of issues of great concern to the Committee arose in the context of article 16, including underage marriage, bride theft and the rate of abortions among adolescents. The responses to questions 19, 27 and 28 of the list of issues did not provide satisfactory information about what was being done to address those issues. She suggested that the Kyrgyz Government might wish to identify communities or regions in which the practices of underage marriage or bride theft were prevalent, and then target them. Since there seemed to be a link between such practices and the poverty and unemployment levels of certain regions, it might be



useful to envisage long-term economic assistance and employment measures to enable the community gradually to emerge from poverty. Marriage would then not be the only way for girls to survive there.

58. It had been indicated that very few cases of bride theft were prosecuted, because parents concealed the facts. She asked whether it would be possible to institute legal measures whereby parents or guardians who did not protect children by bringing the problem to the attention of the authorities could be prosecuted by the State.

59. She suggested that protection officers should be stationed in the regions where the problems consistently recurred so as to help identify families in which girls were in danger of undergoing early marriage. It might also be useful to engage in continuous awareness-raising, not just ad hoc campaigns like “16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women”. She asked whether there were hotlines through which girls themselves could inform the authorities of their fears of being married off and whether there were programmes for schoolchildren to form support groups.

60. **Ms. Mambetali** (Kyrgyzstan) said that the current Family Code envisaged a marriageable age of 18 but there was also a provision whereby in some cases the age could be reduced. That provision dated back to earlier legislation which had permitted such measures if a girl became pregnant. The current version of the Civil Code incorporated the new concept of emancipation of minors, meaning their enjoyment of all civil rights in accordance with certain conditions. The relationship between underage marriage, including bride theft, and the material situation of the family was currently a subject of heated debate. Comprehensive monitoring certainly needed to be carried out, including research into the situations in which those phenomena occurred.

61. **Ms. Isakunova** (Kyrgyzstan) said that early marriage and bride theft were clearly interrelated. Research, and the work of crisis centres and law enforcement agencies, showed that bride theft flourished when schoolgirls had just completed their examinations and finished school. Her country recognized the problem and was ready to work further on it.

62. **Mr. Nazarov** (Kyrgyzstan), speaking on behalf of his entire delegation, thanked the Committee for a

highly constructive dialogue which had revealed that much remained to be done both in strengthening social mechanisms and in improving legal foundations so as to better and more effectively implement the provisions of the Convention. The Committee’s recommendations would help to orient work at all executive levels of government. A press conference would be held, with the participation of representatives of civil society, so as to publicize the results of the meeting and the Committee’s recommendations. As a member of Parliament, he could assure the Committee that it would intensify its monitoring of the implementation not only of the Convention but also of all other human rights conventions.

*The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.*